



Creating an Activity for Parent-Child Participation through Learning to Play Guitar and Ukulele Together

Symons, Gidon

2015 Otaniemi

Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Unit

Creating an Activity for Parent-Child Participation through Learning to Play Guitar and Ukulele Together

Gidon Symons
Degree Programme in Social Services
Bachelor's Thesis
December, 2015

Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Unit
Degree Programme

Abstract

Gidon Symons

Creating an activity for parent-child participation through learning to play guitar and ukulele together

Year 2015 Pages 59

The purpose of this study was to create an activity for parent-child participation through learning to play guitar and ukulele together. The participant group initially consisted of two families of one parent (mother) and two of their children. This, at the decision of the parents, was subsequently reduced to only one of their children due to the inability of the younger siblings to participate effectively. The thesis was done under the VKK Metro Project at Laurea AMK. The working life partner was Kiello International Kindergarten. The findings from the thesis could provide the working life partner with the framework to implement this child-parent activity in the future.

The theoretical background of the study was structured around participation, childhood development, relationship development and creative methods. The nature of this study was that of a project and data was collected via video observation and feedback sheets.

The findings from this thesis suggest that learning to play guitar and ukulele together is an activity that encourages child-parent participation and provides the opportunity to enhance relationship development. The findings further showed that this activity worked best with the six and seven year old children rather than with the four year old children. It was also found that significant individual attention to the child was a necessary component for success. Furthermore, it was universally believed by the participants and the author that this activity would be better performed earlier in the day rather than during the late afternoon.

Keywords: participation, guitar, ukulele, music, relationships, child, parent, VKK Metro, kindergarten

Table of contents

1 INTRODUCTION	6
2 THESIS BACKGROUND	7
2.1 VKK Metro.....	7
2.2 Kielo International Kindergarten.....	8
3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	9
3.1 Participation.....	9
3.2 Childhood Development.....	11
3.2.1 Ecological Systems Theory.....	11
3.2.2 Zone of Proximal Development.....	12
3.3 Relationships.....	13
3.3.1 Parent-Child Relationship.....	14
3.3.2 Sibling Relationships.....	16
3.4 Creative Methods.....	17
3.4.1 Music.....	17
3.4.2 Guitar and Ukulele.....	19
4 STUDY DESIGN	20
4.1 Purpose of the Project Thesis.....	20
4.2 Method.....	20
4.3 SWOT Analysis.....	23
4.4 Project Sessions.....	25
4.4.1 Session 1.....	25
4.4.2 Session 2.....	27
4.4.3 Session 3.....	28
4.4.4 Session 4.....	30
4.4.5 Session 5.....	31
4.4.6 Session 6.....	32
4.4.7 Session 7.....	34
4.4.8 Session 8.....	35
4.4.9 Session 9.....	36
5 EVALUATION	37
5.1 Observation.....	37
5.2 Feedback Sheets.....	39
6 DISCUSSION	40
7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	42
7.1 Autonomy.....	42
7.2 Avoiding Harm.....	43

7.3 Privacy and Data Protection.....	44
References.....	45
Illustration 1.....	49
Illustration 2.....	49
Appendix 1.....	50
Appendix 2.....	53
Appendix 3.....	54

1 INTRODUCTION

A pressing issue in Finland is the need for increased promotion of child and parent participation in early childhood education (VKK Metro, 2015) and the creation of different frameworks which strive to implement such participatory opportunities require development. Children want the opportunity to play with their parents and parents want the opportunity to spend quality time with their children. Yet, despite these mutual desires, the fast pace of modern life can sometimes impose itself upon aspects of the nurturing of these precious relationships.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an opportunity for two families of one parent, each with their two children, to participate in the experience of learning how to play music together with the aim to promote parent-child participation. The working life partner is Kiello International Kindergarten, an English language kindergarten in Helsinki with a decidedly multicultural flavour while the project partner is VKK Metro, The Development Unit of Early Childhood Education in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

The main musical instruments used will be guitar and ukulele and the thesis project will last for 8 weeks with a 1 hour session each week where the participants will be taught by the author how to play music together. The author has over 10 years of experience teaching guitar and ukulele. Each session will focus mainly on the overall goal of parent and child learning and playing a short song together which binds together the main theoretical framework of participation, childhood development, relationships and creative methods (music). In each session there will also be some time spent on some more tightly focused theoretical goal such as parent-child bonding and communication. Data will be collected via video observation of the activity sessions and also by feedback sheets.

This thesis aims to develop, implement and provide an activity with which children and parents can increase their participation in activities together within the scope of early childhood development hence providing an avenue to support parent-child participation. The working-life partner is providing access to ask the parents and children if they want to be involved and they will also provide a room to perform the activities.

2 THESIS BACKGROUND

2.1 VKK Metro

VKK Metro is The Development Unit of Early Childhood Education in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Finnish: Varhaiskasvatuksen kehittämisyksikkö) under the auspices of Socca, The Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Finnish: Pääkaupunkiseudun sosiaalialan osaamiskeskus). VKK Metro works in the municipalities of Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen which accounts for approximately 20% of all the children in Finland. Its operators are Laurea, Diak & Metropolia Universities of Applied Sciences, Helsinki University and the previously mentioned four municipalities in order to facilitate dialogue in research, practice and early childhood education. These partnerships are realised through a combination of theses, practical trainings, projects and research.

VKK Metro's main goals from 2014-2016 are to "• look at play as the children's growth and learning environment • strengthen early childhood educators skills to use the play • to develop the quality of early childhood education(CITE)." While VKK Metro's development goals between 2007-2013 have been to a) observe, document and evaluate, b) to emphasise and support child-parent participation and c) to improve the functioning and further develop co-operation between day care facilities and child health clinics thereby supporting child and family welfare to the highest degree.

The development of VKK Metro relies on continued networking and further co-operation and promotion between the current operators. So far there have been a total of 25 day care centres involved since 2007. To sustain and promote network development, the support and encouragement of working professionals is required and this can be done through research, training courses and workshops. Furthermore, all working professionals involved with VKK Metro projects will further development by learning, evaluating and reflecting upon the work that they do. A pillar of VKK Metro's philosophy is that personal reflection on one's own work is vital to continued development and achieving the highest practices. Such reflection grants the opportunity for revitalising professional practices and deepens understandings related to work practices.

This thesis aligns well with the work and practices performed by VKK-Metro. Not only in the way that it provides a new innovation in early childhood education with which to revitalise professional practices and further education and care options, but specifically it strengthens one of VKK Metro's main goals which is to support child-parent participation throughout childhood.

2.2 Kielo International Kindergarten

Kielo International Kindergarten (Kielo) is a private, English language kindergarten located West Pasila, Helsinki. It opened its doors in September 2013 and has continued to increase the number of children receiving early childhood education and care (ECEC) from just four to nearly 30 and it continues to grow. Kielo offers ECEC to children between the ages of 3-6 and offers an open, inviting and international approach as they “strive towards a multicultural mindset where parties from several cultures are celebrated equally without a religious affiliations (Kielo International Kindergarten 2015).”

The kindergarten is international in the truest sense with children coming from many different countries and cultures and this fits with Kielo's attitude and approach to supporting multiculturalism and the integration of cultures. There are a healthy mix of children from purely Finnish families, children from mixed families (one parent Finnish and the other a foreigner) and children from wholly international families. Kielo has had a multicultural approach from its inception and also classifies itself as non-denominational as they state “At Kielo we believe in freedom of religion, thus Kielo does not have any religious affiliations. We celebrate various parties equally around the world e.g. Halloween, 1st of May/Vappu, Ramadan/Eid, Chinese New Year and Diwali just to name a few...and always approach them from a non-religious point of view (Kielo International Kindergarten 2015).” This approach is directly related to elements of the core principles of ECEC as defined in the National Curriculum Guidelines on Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland (ECEC Guidelines) which “embody children's right to...Their own culture, language, religion and beliefs (STAKES 2004).”

Although Kielo is officially listed as English language day care by the City of Helsinki (City of Helsinki 2015) it is not an entrance requirement to have any prior knowledge of English. Indeed there are some children in attendance for whom both English and Finnish are second languages and this presents a unique set of challenges for the staff and children alike. Kielo's approach to teaching English, both to native speakers and English as a second-language speakers, employs the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method “refers to educational approaches that allow for improved foreign language learning in combination with content learning in a variety of (non-language) subjects (CLIL Research Network 2015).” The CLIL method was put to great effect during the kindergarten's inaugural semester when there were only four students who were Turkish and only spoke Turkish while the manager and teacher only spoke English and Finnish. While there were challenging times to establish communication in the beginning, use of the CLIL method enabled the children's English skills to develop and flourish.

As with all kindergartens in Finland, Kielo follows the ECEC Guidelines (STAKES 2004) while simultaneously implementing its own curricula to support and augment the guidelines. Some of the areas and activities which Kielo focuses on are science, arts & crafts, reading & books, puppet theatre, games & puzzles and music. These are drawn from and supported by core developmental areas such as personal development, social & emotional development, language skills (comprehension & production), physical development, logical & early mathematical skills, artistic & creative development and knowledge & understanding of the world (Kielo International Kindergarten 2015).

This thesis will encompass and reinforce many of the activity and developmental areas that Kielo already supports, most notably music, personal development, social & emotional development and artistic & creative development. Kielo as yet does not have any specific programs which integrate children and their parent/s together in a learning and development environment.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis covers a wide range of theoretical areas. The areas that will be focused on are participation, creative methods (music and guitar & ukulele), relationships and childhood development. Participation will concentrate on the participation of parents and children together in early childhood education as well as children's own participation in their self-determination. Creative methods encompasses the use of a variety of artistic disciplines to aid in promoting health and well-being. Music will be featured as it is the focal point of the thesis project. Primary relationships such as close family and marriage will be discussed with a focus on parent-child relationships and sibling relationships. Childhood development will be looked at from the point of view of ecological systems theory and also from the zone of proximal development which directly relates to the music learning that will take place during the thesis project.

3.1 Participation

Parents involvement and participation in early childhood education can be extremely beneficial for the child. Of course, the majority of parents are involved in their child's early childhood education since it takes place at the home as much as it takes place in kindergartens and other care institutions. However when it comes to participating in play, an adult can provide an extra element to enrich a child's play. Indeed the complexity of play can be enhanced and the duration of play can be extended through an adult's participation and

guidance (Bruner, 1983; Sylva, Roy, & Painter, 1980 as cited in Saracho & Spodek 1998). This can provide a much richer experience for the child and adult alike.

Parent participation in early childhood education is not necessarily exclusive from the kindergarten or school environment although more direct parent participation within the educational institution can be beneficial to both the parent, child and the institution. The participation of parents within the early childhood education system needs encouragement from teaching staff. This works in two ways, firstly teachers need to believe that parents can provide a meaningful contribution by participating within the institutional environment and secondly the teachers must provide an environment for dialogue where this potential participation can be fostered and take eventually place (GonzalezMena, 1999 cited in Mac Naughton & Hughes 2011). It is important that parents are able to voice their opinions on the ways that they would like to participate and then these desires can be coordinated with what is happening and what is needed in the classroom or playground. This in turn gives parents an understanding of where they can fit in and the different ways that they can participate (Mac Naughton & Hughes 2011).

Parent and child learning can reach new heights via a mutually participative process. Co-construction, a continuation of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (discussed in greater detail in childhood development), is a method of learning which emphasises understanding meaning as opposed to acquiring facts and it is achieved through an interaction between a teacher and a student (Jordan, 2004 as cited in Wood & Attfield 2005). Through co-construction adults and children are able to participate together and find equal ground in learning processes. Both the child's and the adult's knowledge of the subject are equally legitimate and sometimes the child may be recognised as the expert. By listening to one another and sharing their ideas a unique, unified perspective is achieved. As value is placed in the child's point of view both parties acquire fresh knowledge that was derived out of different life experiences and can be applied in a variety of concepts. Active participation is the highlight in a co-constructive environment as both parties discover meaning through sharing (Cullen, Fleer & Anning, 2004).

Participation is also a powerful and empowering act which richens life experience and engages societies. It is a powerful agent in the development of communities and in the promotion of health and well-being and this of course will directly effect children and their development. Wallerstein (2002, cited in Underdown ,2006) believes that "active participation", among other factors, is a driving force and an indispensable necessity when assessing a community's capacity for developments in health enhancement. Children need to participate in decision making processes that directly effect their own lives as long as they

are able to properly understand the situation. It is important that in the conceptualisation of childhood, children's individuality and their own intimate knowledge of what they like and don't like, is brought forth in realising that the child's direct participation in their own health and well-being as an essential factor for their development. Participation is such a major concern for the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) that it is at the forefront of their campaigning for children's rights. Children are no longer considered to be innocent bystanders and non-contributors in decisions regarding their own rights. Their views, especially on themselves, are highly valued just like any other human and this is reflected in the UNCRC's three main areas of children's rights: protection, provisions and participation (Underdown, 2006). The UNCRC wants states to enable children of all ages to participate in the managing of their own rights. These sentiments are echoed in the ECEC guidelines which embodies the principle of "giving due weight to the views of the child (STAKES 2004, 13)" and that children "receive understanding and have their say in accordance with their age and maturity (STAKES 2004, 13)."

3.2 Childhood Development

3.2.1 Ecological Systems Theory

Developed by developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979, Ecological Systems Theory provides a framework from which to understand a person's development. When explaining his ideas about development which lead to the theory Bronfenbrenner (1979) states that "Development is defined as the person's evolving conception of the ecological environment, and his relation to it, as well as the person's growing capacity to discover, sustain, or alter its properties." The theory postulates that the different physical environments, social relationships and societal influences that a person exists in all have an effect on human development by the manner in which these elements interact with each other (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 16). Only by accounting for all of these constantly varying factors can a person's growth and development be truly understood.

Bronfenbrenner specified five different systems surrounding the individual which explain the different levels of interaction and these systems are named as follows: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Ultimately, all the systems interact with each other however there are closer interrelationships between the microsystem and the mesosystem and also the interrelationships between the exosystem and the macrosystem. The microsystem is the social and environmental layer which is closest to the individual and this layer containing the relationships that are most immediate such as family, friends and institu-

tional education environments (e.g. kindergarten, school). In the mesosystem the developing individual interacts with the closest relationships found in the microsystem and these closest relationships all interact with each other to effect the individual's development, growth and perception of their environment. Bronfenbrenner defines the mesosystem "as a set of interrelations between two or more settings in which the developing person becomes an active participant (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 209)." The exosystem brings forth elements that are outside of the developing individual's active participation yet still have an affect on the individual's contained setting. To a young child some of these elements might be their parent's job, a brother or sister's school class or their parent's friends (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 25). Finally, the macrosystem encapsulates the previous three systems and places everything in the wider social, political, cultural and ideological context that an individual lives within. Interrelations between various elements (e.g. home and school) transpire differently in different societies and cultures and thus an individual's macrosystem will also be highly influential in development even, once again, without the individual having any active participation (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 26).

In this project the importance of appreciating the role of Ecological Systems Theory when understanding the effects that the project may have on the participants is likely to be high. As all the participants' ecological environments and systems, parents and children alike, are varied their individual responses to the project activities must be viewed in such a manner and will effect collective attitudes and behaviours as well.

3.2.2 Zone of Proximal Development

In terms of childhood education, or any education for that matter, the manner by which a subject or task is taught plays a critical role in the success of the teaching and the development of both learner and teacher. The concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) was developed by Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky in the early 20th century. The concept focuses on cognitive development as it is applied to learning new tasks and understanding new ideas. It is an ingenious, two-fold method which not only develops cognitive abilities but also promotes social interaction in the learning process and shows of its benefits. Teamwork is a key component as a student learns new skills from a master, skills that are at a point just beyond what the student's cognitive capabilities would allow for the task at hand to be attempted or completed if not for the assistance and guidance of the master (Waller 2005). This social interaction and cognitive development has effects on both sides of the table, on the student and on the master. According to West (1985, 14), there are three main themes at the core of Vygotsky's theory which are "(1) a reliance on a genetic or

developmental method; (2) the claim that higher mental processes in the individual have their origin in social processes; and (3) the claim that mental processes can be understood only if we understand the tools and signs that mediate them.” In Vygotsky's own words he crystallises the boundaries of ZPD stating that it is ”...the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978 as cited in McLeod, 2010).” So it is clear that Vygotsky held that the advancement of cognitive development at its core relates to the social nature of humans, essentially the passing on of knowledge from generation to generation and thus this method must be consciously integrated cohesively into teaching methods to ensure the highest potential for successful learning.

According to Richardson (1998) there are ZPD studies which reveal that it is relatively simple for children to learn ”complex cultural tools, such as social skills, numeracy, and motor skills” as long as they are presented to the child within their own cultural context. Richardson further argues that the relative ease of 'social' learning compared to the struggle of learning in school is because it creates a learning environment that caters to satisfying multiple sides of the developmental process simultaneously, namely ”motivational” needs and ”technical-operational” needs.

Adhering to Vygotsky's ZPD is undoubtedly essential when teaching guitar and ukulele to both parent and child during this project with the ZPD differing between each participating member quite substantially due to age, motor and cognitive development levels. A key will be to quickly assess ZPD and implement tasks which can sufficiently encourage the individual's ability to develop in a constructive way. Another potentially positive influence will be harnessing cultural context and allowing, as much as possible, music that is culturally significant to the participants to be employed as either direct material or as a springboard for further motivation and encouragement.

3.3 Relationships

Relationships between people are, obviously, one of the most essential elements of human life and these relationships can be varied in length and impact on those that experience that relationship together. Some relationships can be extremely meaningful and life-defining, some can be fleeting and generally insignificant while there are some that fit in to various degrees of 'somewhere in between'. Noller, Feeney & Peterson (2001, 1) define different types of relationships and state that “marriage, parent-child relationships and friendships would all be

considered as personal relationships". They continue to explain the nature of personal relationships as being where the feeling of the association is enduring in addition to the experiencing of a wide variety of activities with one another.

The affect and importance of healthy parent-child relationships, sibling relationships and relationships with friends and other primary caregivers cannot be understated in relation to health & well-being and how social experiences are perceived throughout life. "We never escape our earliest social relationships, our earliest experiences, even if we cannot recall them. They form the template, the pattern, the stereotype of future relationships and understandings of situations (Cochrane, R. Senior Editor's Preface. *Psychology of Childhood*. By Peter Mitchell. 1992.)." There are a number of key elements that are common in personal relationships and, attachment aside, they present themselves individually throughout various stages of a lifetime. Some of these elements are intimacy, communication, conflict, power & control, cultural & subcultural issues and interrelational effects (Noller et al, 2001).

3.3.1 Parent-Child Relationship

"Child-parent relationships are special (Lang & Fingerman, 2003 45)". There are many factors which make this statement truthful. Of all the relationships people have the bonds created between parent and child are often extremely strong and long-lasting. Young children look up to their parents and many parents are completely obsessed with their children. There is also an ever present link through the generations that is represented via the parent-child relationship (Lang & Fingerman, 2003). Usually the child-parent relationship is the longest relationship that two people will have in their lives and this can go beyond just the years when they are alive. The relationship can still be very strong in timeframe from the child's birth until the parent's or child's death as it can start during the early stages of pregnancy and last until well after the death of either parent or child. Parents have the task of socialising their children in to the various social structures that exist within the family and also within society at large and this can be realised through parenting styles (Lang & Fingerman, 2003).

During infancy is where attachment is formed which is the formation and development of the infant's first social relationship. Attachment theory was first developed by John Bowlby whose theory initially focused on the relationship of the mother and her infant child (Bowlby 1998). The importance of people having developed strong attachment bonds in infancy and childhood relates directly to the way they are able to process emotions, develop relationships and interact in a positive social manner later in life. Attachment describes the behaviours and emotions surrounding what is considered to be the first emotionally significant relationship in a person's life, usually the child's mother. The situations and processes leading to attachment

can be observed in a few ways. The maturing of an infant socially can be deduced through the infant's negativity upon separation from the parents or from strangers coming too close. This maturation is a tell tale sign of the development of emotions and announces an infant's preparedness for the true development of significant relationships. The first of such significant relationships subsequently leads to a disregard, in the relative short term, for multiple relationships of such emotional magnitude (Noller et al. 2001). Attachment during infancy can have various social effects as life progresses. In determining an understanding of aspects of infant attachment and social interaction in later years, Mitchell (1992) cites Bowlby and his various studies into the phenomenon. Bowlby concluded that adults that were deprived of their mother as infants lacked the ability to make friends and were able to only form shallow relationships. They also lacked a capacity for guilt, showed almost no emotional responses, were unreachable psychologically and the propensity to engage in "pointless deceit, evasion and stealing."

As children grow older, towards kindergarten and early school age, the relationships with their parents and others in their social group will be heavily influenced by parenting style. While there might be considered many parenting styles there are two which will be classified here. The first is known as "authoritative parenting, characterized by high levels of warmth, behavioral control, and little psychological control...", while the second is known as "authoritarian parenting, characterized by little (or medium) warmth, and both behavioral as well as psychological control (Lang & Fingerman, 2003, 50)." Authoritative parenting is generally found to result in children who are at lower risk of behavioural issues, prevail in academic success and have a healthy image of themselves (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbush, 1991 cited in Lang et al 2003).

A child's initial experience of being in a social context without a parent might be when they first attend kindergarten or elementary school and it may also be the initial such experience for the parent. The child-parent relationship now exists in a new context where a greater number of external factors will begin to mould the relationship in new ways. The child is now effected by the goings on in the classroom which will effect the parent in turn, while the parent is now effected by the institution itself via teachers and administration. There has been a link found where healthy parent-institution relationships result in positive academic experiences for the child (Fend, 1998; Griffith, 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994 cited in Lang et al 2003)."

3.3.2 Sibling Relationships

For a child who has one or more siblings, the development of these sibling relationships play a significant role in the child's social and cognitive development. Due to the need for siblings to interact with one another socially and the concessions that need to be made in regard to age differences in order to facilitate succesful interactions, having a sibling gives a child a better chance of developing a strong theory of mind, the ability to understand other people's emotions, feelings and behaviours, faster than that of an only child (Perner, Ruffman and Leekam cited in Noller et al. 2001, 35). One of the ways that having a sibling can facilitate intellectual development is through older siblings teaching new skills to younger siblings, something known as the sibling tutoring effect (Zajonc & Hall 1986, cited in Noller et al 2015). This sibling tutoring effect phenomenon is likely to be present in this thesis due to there being two pairs of siblings and a large enough cognitive and motor skill development gap between each of them. As this phenomenon occurs it is important to allow for these interactions to develop naturally as it could strengthen the bonds between the siblings.

Further indications of the effects that siblings can have on one another is discussed by Reid, Stahl & Striano (2010) who found that infant motor development might be influenced by a sibling's contribution during free play. There is potentially less development earlier on at 5 months due to older siblings giving toys easily to an infant whereas a parent may put them just out of reach on purpose in order to stimulate the infant's motor development. Conversely, at around 12 months old an infant with a sibling has increased success in "goal-directed activity (Reid, Stahl & Striano, 2010)" which aligns with evidence that suggests that a 5 month old infant is incapable of understanding goal-directed acitivity.

Sibling rivalry has the potential to create negative effects on psychological development in the event that one or both of the siblings have the perception that they are being treated differently to one another by a parent. If there is an imbalance in the giving of affection and/or discipline between the siblings, this can adversely affect the nature of the siblings' relationship. However there is also the potential for such different treatment to shed a positive light if the treatment is due to "parental sensitivity to children's individuality and special needs (Noller et al 2015, 36)." Realistically speaking though, due to the large differences in childhood development over a short time period it is natural that a parent will treat young children quite differently in order to relate to them in an appropriate manner for their developmental stage, i.e. siblings that are a 2 year old and a 5 year old (Noller et al 2015). Such sibling rivalry has the potential to exist in this project as each pair of siblings will be in a learning environment with a parent and due to the likelihood of each sibling developing their ability to play music at a different rate, one sibling may feel inferior due to

the other's faster progress. Should this occur the sibling tutoring effect should be encouraged as this could strengthen their bond in a situation that may put stresses on it.

3.4 Creative Methods

Creative methods in social work is an important area which, as will be shown, can bring forth extremely positive results for clients when applied skillfully by a social worker or carer. Whereas creativity is used by social workers in practice, in this thesis creative methods refers to using artistic disciplines such as painting, drawing, sculpting, playing music and writing among others, in order to achieve a desired therapeutic benefit for the client. According to Smith (2004, 14), Martinez-Brawley and Zorita believe that from their own professional experience, social workers performing at a high level will integrate a variety of approaches, including "elements of art, craft and disciplined reasoning" to yield the best results for a given situation. Such creative practices are held in high regard according to the ECEC Guidelines where it states that "Through artistic experiences and activities, children develop as individuals and as group members...Art provides educators with means to develop as a human being and to help develop humanity in children (STAKES 2004)." As such it would seem that supporting parent-child relationships through learning to play ukulele and guitar covers a broad spectrum of health & well-being and developmental elements for all ages.

3.4.1 Music

Music is a fundamental part of human development and not surprisingly it has also formed a significant part of traditional childhood education (Pound & Harrison, 2002). Pound et al (2002), also believe that all people are born 'musical', as opposed to it being a gift that only some possess, and that there are important biological purposes for music. As such it is an extremely valuable educational tool which, due to its innate existence, can be applied to anyone. Of course music is not only a tool for education but it provides a backbone, a communal fabric from which to dress almost all aspects of life. There are many functional aspects of music that people and societies rely on. Music is used "to create atmosphere or mood; to support group identity; to support memory; to communicate in situations where it may otherwise be difficult (Pound et al, 2002, 11)."

From a biological perspective music plays a significant role in human development. Different aspects of music are associated with the different hemispheres of the brain and thus engaging in various musical activities actually stimulates both hemispheres simultaneously. For example, the left hemisphere of the brain is associated with speech which would therefore be

linked to the lyrics of a song while the right hemisphere of the brain is associated with “musical sounds” (Odam 1995: 19 as cited in Pound et al, 2002) and is connected to the tune of the song. Odam illuminates the special role that music delivers to the human experience in the manner that it is able to demand services from both of the brain’s hemispheres via controlled motion (1995 cited in Pound et al, 2002).

In an effort to expand the sphere of human capacity in light of the rigid IQ score, Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner proposed that there isn’t just one intelligence that defines a human but rather that humans have multiple intelligences. Of the eight he proposed one of them is musical intelligence. Musical intelligence is defined by one’s capability in the perception, discrimination, transformation and expression of music which would equate into the practical abilities/competences of composition, performance, musical perception and critique. Gardner is of the opinion that just about anyone can further develop these intelligences to great heights with the relevant guidance and support (Armstrong, 2009). Gardner’s belief that virtually everyone is born ‘musical’ and should therefore participate in musical activities is illuminated in the structures of many societies globally where music as a part of everyday life, is commonplace and is generally expected of everyone. Blacking (1976 as cited in Pound et al 2002) argues that in African societies everyone is able to perform their own culture’s music while Messenger (1958: 20, cited in Sloboda and Davidson 1996: 176, cited in Pound et al 2002) accounts for the state of wonderment when witnessing the level of musicianship in Nigeria and in particular how very young children could sing countless songs, whether in groups or by themselves as well as being able to play assorted percussion instruments. A search for someone that could not play music was unsuccessful.

Music has been a staple in early childhood education for reasons both academic and emotional. Froebel believed that mothers singing to their babies was an extremely important educational exercise and also felt that it was a primal method for the expression of happiness (Lilley 1967, cited by Kendall 1986: 45 cited by Pound et al. 2002). In early childhood education, music can be used as a learning tool in its own right as it can be applied to many areas of daily life. Hildebrandt (1998:68 cited in Pound et al 2002) gives a number of examples of the way that music can be used as a tool during early childhood education. It can be used “to help ease transitions (between one activity and another); to attract the children’s attention and re-engage them in a group focus; to help children learn social values and behaviours; to help children learn letters, numbers, etc.; to celebrate special occasions; to celebrate ethnic diversity as well as social solidarity; to make connections between music, language, visual arts and other areas of the early childhood curriculum.”

Music has a significant impact on childhood development in the areas of “emotion, communication and playfulness (Pound et al, 2002, 43)” and as such it is vital that music is used in early childhood education. Music is often considered to be a language and draws similar comparisons to spoken language. Johnson (2002) draws on one aspect of music as a language in a deep way by the belief that listening to and/or creating music constitutes the participation in a larger, shared communal activity which is greater than the individual and contains within it a mutual understanding of life. Music doesn't describe things implicitly, rather “it 'speaks' in ways that we find collectively meaningful (Johnson 2002, 22)”. This notion of music being a mode of communication is a significant part of its role in early childhood education.

3.4.2 Guitar and Ukulele

Guitar and ukulele have been chosen as the musical instruments to be used in this thesis and there are several reasons why. The most important reason is that the author has the ability to teach the participants how to play music on these instruments due to many years of prior experience teaching music on these instruments. Originally of Portuguese origin and subsequently becoming the national instrument of Hawaii (Tranquada & King, 2012), the ukulele is a 4 stringed instrument that looks like a miniature guitar whereas the modern acoustic guitar originated in Spain and can be traced back to the mid 18th Century (Tyler & Sparks, 2002).

Both guitar and ukulele are relatively inexpensive instruments when looking at basic models which means that they are affordable to most families and thus can provide a realistic choice as instruments for a child and parent to learn together. Both instruments can play either melodically or provide harmonic accompaniment (i.e. play chords) and since either instrument can support the other one it provides a wealth of musical opportunities for child-parent learning. Guitar and ukulele both require the development of fine motor skills in order to be played competently and therefore provide an excellent opportunity for children to develop such motor skills. Due to the ukulele's diminutive size it provides an excellent launching pad for developing the skills needed to play guitar although in a more accessible and less cumbersome package.

4 STUDY DESIGN

4.1 Purpose of the Project Thesis

The purpose of this thesis project is to support parent-child relationships through learning to play guitar and ukulele together. It also serves the purpose of providing the working-life partner with a record of findings from the practical usage of creative methods, in this case learning to play music, on the participating subjects. The working-life partner has stated their interest in being involved in projects of this nature from both an educational and social point of view. This is the first type of project thesis to be conducted by the working-life partner so far and the findings can be used to further develop their own curriculum and for understanding various aspects of parent-child relationships. The findings can also be used in the design, implementation and/or assesment of future projects that have a similar purpose.

4.2 Method

In this thesis there were initially a total of 6 participants that formed the subject of the study. The group participating contained two families of one parent, each with their two children. One of the families, Family X, consists of a mother and her two sons while the other family, Family Y, consists of a mother and her two daughters. The children all attend Kielo and have an age range of 4-7 years old. After contacting the kindergarten and asking if it was possible for them to be the working life partner of the thesis project, an information sheet detailing the project was placed in the lockers of each child as well as being placed on the notice board in the entrance hall. Initially there were no prerequisites or particular desired qualities, for instance prior musical training, to be looked for in potential group participants apart from there being a parent or carer and a child that could participate in the project together. After receiving interest from a few different families this group of two families was chosen as the children were at good ages (between 4 and 7) to be able to learn ukulele and it was believed that having some siblings could additionally support the family dynamics of the parent-child interactions. The choice of these participants was further justified on a number of grounds. Firstly, they were the most suitable participants that responded to the information sheet which was on the announcement board at Kielo and secondly, it was a requirement of Laurea AMK that for a student in the degree programme in social services to gain kindergarten teacher qualification it was necessary that the thesis topic concerns "social, pedagogical, developmental, educational, service or work development issues related to children aged 0-8 or to families with children (Laurea 2012)." The participating parents were mothers although this was not by design and the thesis project could have been done with ei-

ther the mother or the father as the participating parent as the focus is on parent-child participation. After about half of the project sessions it was mutually decided with the parents that the two younger children wouldn't continue for the remaining sessions as they were unable to remain focused and were causing too much disruption to the remaining participants. This left the participant group at 4 people.

Parent-child participation was realised through the experience of learning to play musical instruments together. The instruments that were used were guitar for the parents and ukulele for the children and the reasons for these choices were several fold. The author has been teaching guitar for over 10 years and ukulele for 3 years privately to students of all ages from between 5 years and 70 years old and has the relevant experience to teach these instruments within the context of this 8 week project. The author also believes that ukulele as opposed to guitar, due to its smaller size and easier playability, was the appropriate choice for the children in this project from the point of view that the likelihood of being able to gain quicker gratification of musical 'achievement/success' is higher. Although musical success was not the main purpose of the project it was likely that such success would be beneficial in inspiring the children and keeping their interest in the sessions. Instruments were provided to the participants during the sessions at no cost and since Kielo did not have any guitars or ukuleles of their own these instruments were purchased by the author. In addition to these stringed instruments, some basic percussion instruments, such as clave sticks, shakers and tambourines, were also to be employed to assist in learning rhythm.

There were 8 one-hour sessions which took place weekly at the end of the kindergarten day, approximately 15.30, in one of the spare rooms at Kielo. This time was chosen as it was the only available time that all parties were able to meet together. The sessions used varied approaches towards encouraging parent-child participation through learning guitar and ukulele together. One of the activities which ran through all of the sessions, and ultimately became the main focus, was to learn a couple of familiar nursery rhymes/children's songs which the parent and child could play together. Some familiar nursery rhymes were chosen as the basis for learning to play music on the instruments. Songs that the children and parents could already sing were more easily transferable onto the instruments without the need for learning to read standard musical notation. This practice is utilised by the Suzuki Method of learning to play music where "Learning to play before learning to read (European Suzuki Association 2015)" is considered to be a crucial aspect. In order to further assist the learning process and for the participants to have a written reference of the music (Appendix 3), the songs were notated using tablature and chord diagrams which are different forms of musical notation that can be learned very quickly by beginners. Tablature (Illustration 1) is a musical notation system which uses "letters, numbers, or other signs to indicate the strings, frets, keys, etc., to

be played (Dictionary.com 2015).” Chord diagrams (Illustration 2) are a “visual representation of a guitar chord (Laukens 2010).”

Since the aim was to encourage parent-child participation it was useful to create an environment where they can not only learn together but also learn from each other too. For example one of the children could start teaching the parent as they were already familiar with the song's melody. Learning to play just one short song as a beginner can take a number of weeks depending on the individual's ability and the amount of time spent practicing, therefore elements of support and encouragement needed to be strong throughout the entire project. However, the key factor in the encouragement of parent-child participation via the learning of the melodies together was that the melodies were arranged so that they were played on the 'A' string on both guitar and ukulele. Both instruments have an open string which is tuned to the note 'A' creating the situation where if each melody was arranged to be played on this string it would be done with the same positions for the fingers on the fretboard across each instrument. This enabled a unified system for communication between the child and parent as they were effectively performing the same physical task and could reference off each other throughout the learning process. This proved to be essential.

Materials used during some sessions had a greater focus on understanding just the instruments themselves (Appendix 1) while some other specific elements of music, such as percussive rhythm, were incorporated into the learning of the songs. By integrating these different aspects, the participants gained a more complete view of learning to play music with the instruments and had a wide range of tasks to learn together. In general the main theoretical frameworks of this thesis overlapped one another throughout all of the sessions even though there were some sessions that had some more focused theoretical goals and outcomes. Another important factor was that the participants had the opportunity to guide the direction of the sessions as they evolved so it was essential that some of the sessions were left relatively open so that they could be organised in a fashion that included the participants' input.

The two participating families came from different cultural backgrounds although it was not considered that identifying these cultures was necessary for a number of reasons. Due to the thesis not being focused on potential cultural influences in parent-child participation, it was not considered to be a defining feature of the participant group in its potential effects on the thesis project. Additionally, cultural heritage had no influence on the selection of the participant group. Lastly, some ethical considerations in regards to the participants potentially being identified through cultural markers via the publishing of the report at the conclusion of the project also bore consideration (these ethical considerations will be expanded upon in the Ethics section). This issue was discussed further with the participants

prior to the commencement of the thesis project's sessions and in the event that the participants' cultural backgrounds lent significant weight to the findings and/or any of the processes involved in this project, considerations for the addition of these findings were given.

The sessions were filmed for the purposes of observation which was done after each of the sessions was completed. The author was the only person that viewed the footage and after the completion of the project with the final report being published on Theseus, the footage was destroyed. The participants were informed of this, were asked for permission beforehand and agreed. The data was collected via video observation and also through a feedback sheet. With the received permission of the working-life partner, the parents of the children and with the childrens' knowledge of the situation, the sessions were filmed so that finer details of the interactions taking place could be analysed in a more objective manner. A video camera was placed inconspicuously although it could still be seen by the participants and it did gain some interest from the children. For the most part the children seemed to forget it was there for the majority of the time. This was a double-edged sword as the interactions were not necessarily as 'natural' as if the participants were not being filmed or were being filmed unknowingly. However as the author was doing the thesis alone and leading the project sessions, it would have been impossible to understand the interactions between the parent and child in such detail without the video observation. A short questionnaire/feedback sheet was given near the end of the thesis project to allow the participant parents a chance to give feedback in a formal manner even though there was constant feedback and dialogue throughout the sessions. The participant children were asked regularly throughout the sessions for feedback through informal conversation.

All the participants know the author already as the author spent 10 weeks during 2014 in a work practice placement at the working-life partner's premises gathering experience as a kindergarten teacher. This prior professional relationship may have effected the behaviour and interaction of the participants compared to a situation where the participants were going into a study without already knowing the researcher.

4.3 SWOT Analysis

SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and is an evaluation and planning analysis methodology that forms the basis of strategic management. It is commonly employed to develop a business's strategy by aligning the company's internal environment (strengths & weaknesses) with the external market's climate (opportunities & threats) (Coate 2007, citing Miles & Snow 1984). It is also an appropriate method for evaluating many kinds of

projects. In the preparation stage SWOT was employed to define the positives and negatives that surrounded the project which gave an overall understanding and allowed for a state of preparedness as the project unfolded. The SWOT analysis for this thesis was as follows:

Strengths

- An excellent relationship with the working-life partner including full support for the project.
- Extensive experience in teaching music to both children and adults.
- Ability to improvise and adjust sessions and/or teaching methods as the project progresses.
- Belief in the topic of the project which provides further inspiration to strive for success.

Weaknesses

- Potential language barrier: None of the participants are native English speakers which is the language of instruction. Although the children have been in an English language kindergarten and their English language skills are good, their mother tongues and languages spoken at home are not English so some language communication may get lost. The adults participating, also not native English speakers, have good English but there may also be instances where certain instructions are not understood clearly.
- First time undertaking a bachelor level thesis project may lead to potential unknowables and uncertainties which could effect the project's momentum and effectiveness.
- Working individually means taking on full responsibility for the entire workload which can create a challenging environment and may lead to excessive pressure and stress.

Opportunities

- Successful implementation of the project with clearly positive results meaning that the participants relationships have been supported.
- The idea of the project could be implemented in the future in other situations where parent-child relationship support is needed.

Threats

- Participant group are uninterested in the sessions, become bored and don't have an environment where supporting relationships can flourish.
- Unforeseen problems develop with either members of the participant group and/or the working-life partner creating a strained working relationship.

- Any members of the participant group are unable to start and/or complete the project.

4.4 Project Sessions

As the main focus of the project sessions was for the parent and child to participate in the learning of music together there was naturally a heavy focus during all of the sessions on the actual playing of the instrument and subsequently the development of the necessary physical and mental capabilities to do so. For the parent and child to learn to play a musical instrument together required that in each and every session the theoretical goals were the same as all the theoretical goals would need to be present and addressed in each session for the outcomes to be achieved. Thus in each session the theoretical goals were parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele. As is discussed in further detail below, the organisation of the sessions underwent significant change over the first few weeks due to the initial plan of having all six participants attend the sessions together not working well. The reasons were mostly due to the two younger siblings being unable to concentrate and participate which translated into providing too large a distraction for their parents and older siblings. This culminated in the departure of the younger siblings from the thesis project and resulted in the final four sessions having the two families separated and given individual sessions. These sessions provided the opportunity for greater focus from the parent towards the older child and also from the author towards the participants. The outcome from these changes were extremely positive as parent and child were able to connect with each other and more effectively learn to play music together. This did come with the loss of not being able to implement some of the initially planned ideas which had a more specific focus on exploring the zone of proximal development and relationship development, although had there been individual sessions organised in this way from the onset there may have been time to implement them. It must be said though that ideas from the zone of proximal development and relationship development were naturally encountered throughout the sessions as is further described below. The theoretical outcomes of the project sessions as a whole are analysed in the Discussions section (p 39).

4.4.1 Session 1

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

The first session was for the most part an introduction for everyone where the plan for the sessions was explained and discussed. Unfortunately only one of the families, Family Y,

showed up as there was a miscommunication with the other family, Family X, so for this session the participant group was cut in half. Child Y1 is 6 years old and child Y2 is 4 years old and both seemed quite nervous and shy at the onset but displayed it in different ways with the older child Y1 being more shy and withdrawn and the younger child Y2 becoming quite active and not being able to sit and relax. This made for a challenging initial introduction to the sessions and to the instruments although it was expected that this would be the case for the first couple of sessions. The instruments were tuned and then handed out, a ukulele each to the children and a guitar to the parent. As they got accustomed to having the instruments in hand they were told about the plan for the sessions and that we were going to be learning how to play 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' (Twinkle) together, with an emphasis on *together*.

Firstly they were shown where and how to put their fingers on the instruments in order to create a sound. Most of this was understood quite clearly although because English was not their mother tongue they would ask their mother if there were things they did not understand, she would then ask for clarification and would then explain in their native tongue. Twinkle was played for them on the ukulele and they were shown where to put their fingers to play the notes of the melody. Parent Y can already play basic melodies and chords on guitar so it was easy for her to demonstrate to her children how to play 'Twinkle'. Child Y1 although initially quite reserved was able to get the basic technique happening quickly and could play through most of the melody although it did seem quite challenging. Parent Y's ability to encourage and assist child Y1 was a key factor.

After some time child Y2 was able to relax, join in and begin learning how to play 'Twinkle' on the ukulele. Once he was shown the basic technique and where to put his fingers to play the melody, it was with Parent Y's encouragement and persistence that child Y2 was able to achieve some success, although the session as a whole was quite a challenge for him. While it was originally thought that a 4 year old may be too young for this type of activity it was decided that because of the interaction with the mother and sibling it may become somewhat easier for such a young child to participate. There were some moments when child Y2's inability to be relaxed and participate in the activity in a calm fashion was becoming a distraction to child Y1 and to his mother.

The theoretical goals of parent-child participation were met through the participants' involvement while relationship development was addressed through Parent Y's encouragement

4.4.2 Session 2

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

The prior miscommunication with Family X was sorted out and all the participants came this time. With all six participants together the atmosphere was quite different to the first session. Family X was introduced to the objectives of the thesis, the different activities we would be doing and the instruments themselves. Child X1 had played a bit of piano in the past but parent X and child X2 had not played a musical instrument before so playing instruments was completely new to them. Parent X and child X1 were able to quickly become familiar with the instruments as they were shown the basic techniques of how to play. 'Twinkle' was demonstrated for them and they were shown which frets to put their fingers on and how many times to play each note in order to play the melody of 'Twinkle'. Child X2 found it more difficult to get control of the basic techniques but did manage to play a few notes. Child Y2 who was already familiar with the melody from the previous week started off well and was able to play through the melody slowly with Parent Y helping out by calling out the names of the frets that he needed to play. Child Y1 found it difficult at the beginning of this session despite some familiarity with the process and the music. This may have been attributed to the change in atmosphere due to more people being in the room.

In order to facilitate instruction, tablature and chord diagrams were introduced to the participants. Child Y1 in particular found this to be quite helpful and it seemed to ease his apprehension about playing the music. He was then asked if he could use the tablature sheet to teach the song to his mother and he found this to be quite a fun activity. The tables were then turned as parent Y gave her guitar to child Y1 and showed him how to play 'Twinkle' on guitar which was quite successful and looked to be an enjoyable experience.

The chords were written out for parent X and as she was able to start playing the first chord quickly and quite easily. Then it was time to see whether she could accompany child X1 while child X1 played the melody. It was quite successful and Parent X looked happy, although by this time child X1's fingers were starting to get sore and she had not quite realised her achievement despite receiving praise. Child X2 however did not take to playing the ukulele quite as well as her sister as she was not very interested in participating despite being encouraged to take part. She was not forced to do so and she sat quietly for most of the session and was not a distraction. At the end of the session Parent X asked if she could take home the guitar and a couple of ukuleles so that they could play at home during the week. Although this was not something that was required it was encouraging to see that her level of interest was quite high.

Child Y2 had found this session extremely hard to be able to join in and was creating an atmosphere that proved to have a negative effect on the other participants. The issue was discussed with his mother and it was mutually decided that he was probably a bit too young to be able to do this kind of activity and wouldn't continue further at this time.

4.4.3 Session 3

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

This session began with the participants being given some ukulele worksheets (Appendix 1) which they needed to work on together in order to understand the information and complete the worksheets successfully. The first worksheet was a ukulele fact sheet which explained some information about where the ukulele is from, the origins of its name and what the name means. Attached to this fact sheet was a short questionnaire that asked some questions from which the answers were in the fact sheet. The children needed their parents to read the sheet so that they could then answer the questions. Parents were given about 5 minutes to read, explain and translate the ukulele fact sheet to their children. The children were mostly interested and listened to their parents explanations. They were asked afterwards whether everything from the worksheet was understood and then showed their answers. The answers to these ukulele facts were then discussed amongst the group briefly. The final question asked them to draw a ukulele which all the children were quite excited about did it with gusto.

The second worksheet was a picture with various parts of the ukulele written out with arrows pointing from the words to that part of the ukulele (e.g. strings, frets, etc...). The parents needed to read the text to their children to help them understand the sheet. They translated some of the words in to their native languages as it helped the children learn and understand. After this they were given a similar sheet but without the arrows so that they then had to connect the words to the different parts of the ukulele by drawing in the arrows themselves. The first sheet was taken away so that they could try to remember the different parts on their own which encouraged participation and interaction between the parents and children.

After they had finished that sheet I took a ukulele and pointed to different parts and asked the children to say what the part was. Most they knew but for some of the less familiar ones they asked their parents for confirmation if what they were going to say was correct further strengthening the participation and interaction between the parents and their children. Only a ukulele was used as the parts of the instrument are basically identical to a guitar which they were told about.

Next was a short exercise to focus on just rhythm by clapping the melody of Twinkle while singing it at the same time. There are many things to concentrate on while trying to play a melody on ukulele or guitar and since clapping is a physical movement that is easier to play in time to the melody of the song, it allows the participants to focus on just the rhythm without worrying about the physical techniques required to play the melody on the instruments. This proved to be quite fun for the children and they started to connect the idea that they had to play the notes on the instrument with the same timing as when they were clapping.

The playing part of the session then began and the parent and child groups were each asked to play as much as they knew of 'Twinkle' so far, first the child, then the parent and then the pair together if possible. Parent X and child X1 played through the beginning melody a few times together and were starting to gain some control over the instruments and the music as they both concentrated intently and were making some good progress. Child X2 had by this stage become disinterested in playing music and was playing with some other kindergarten toys that were in the room. Parent Y and child Y1 started out in a similar fashion by playing the melody together but after a few minutes child Y1 decided to teach the song to his mother like in the previous week. Child Y1 gave the ukulele to Parent Y and proceeded to show her how to play the song by reading the tablature sheet and telling her where to put her fingers on the ukulele to play the melody. This looked to be a positive bonding experience for the pair.

As the session wore on and the children were unable to keep concentrating they started to focus a bit on the camera and wanted to go and play with some of the kindergarten toys. There was minimal effort given to make the children continue sitting as it was important that the atmosphere was kept very relaxed and the children did not feel that they had to sit down and concentrate intensely for the entire session or were being forced to participate. They were asked to play quietly which gave the opportunity to directly focus on a few questions that the parents wanted to ask about playing the guitar. The last 10-15 minutes of the session was then spent discussing various aspects of playing guitar with the parents who had some further questions. Parent X had no prior experience playing a musical instrument while Parent Y had already learned to play basic open chords and melodies on the guitar already. As such, each parent was able to be given slightly different ways of accompanying their children which reflected their abilities on the instrument at that time.

4.4.4 Session 4

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

During this session a new song, Old MacDonald Had a Farm ('Old MacDonald'), was introduced in order to bring some variety to the repertoire. However the children would be the ones that would teach it to the parents as they were already familiar with the basics of the tablature system and could call out to their parents where they needed to put their fingers to play the right notes. The idea was that initially neither child or parent would know what the song was and through learning the melody together they could recognise the tune. Child Y1, who had actually done this in one of the previous sessions when calling out the fret numbers to his mother, immediately said that he did not understand what to do and seemed to be highly anxious. After being explained again was still not happy about it, threw the paper to the floor and went off in to the corner to play with child X2 who had already decided not to participate and was playing with some toys on the floor. Shortly afterwards though, parent Y had convinced child Y1 to come back to his seat and he started to read out the fret numbers and tell his mother what to play. He still seemed a bit anxious but was able to get through it successfully. Contrastingly, child X1 did not have any negativity towards the exercise and had started to teach parent X where to put her fingers and they started to learn the tune together with less fuss. However, neither child was able to recognise the tune when their parents played it on the instruments but when the melody was hummed they did.

Then it was time for the children to play the new song on the ukulele with the help of their parents. Child Y1 was having a tough time settling in to playing the new song but after a short while he was progressing through it with parent Y's assistance and the melody he was playing was clearly recognisable as 'Old MacDonald'. Parent Y persisted and helped child Y1 focus and gave excellent encouragement to enable child Y1 to learn the song. Parent X had similar success when assisting child X1 to learn the new tune and child X1 could also play the melody quite well in a short period of time. Child X1 was able to focus quite well for short periods. Both parents and children appeared to have a sense of accomplishment at being able to play through the melody and learn together.

Next up were some rhythmic exercises using some pencils as drum sticks and hitting them on chairs. The exercise was quite simple as they just needed to listen and then copy the rhythms that I played. We switched to hitting the pencils on some boxes instead as they were louder and the rhythm that had to be copied was easier to hear. Most of the rhythms could be played quite easily by the parents and the children. Then we all tapped out the rhythm of the melody of 'Old MacDonald' while singing at the same time in order to reinforce the melody's

rhythm so that when playing the song on the instruments the melodic rhythm would be stronger. This would aid the parent and child in being able to play in time together easier.

Finally the participants tried to play through the melody of 'Old MacDonald' again to reinforce what they had learned earlier. Parent X and Child X1 were able to play the first part of the melody together quite well and the rhythmic exercises that were just completed seemed to have a positive effect. Parent Y and child Y1 had a tougher time as child Y1 started to appear quite anxious and uncomfortable again and was not so interested in playing although once again through Parent Y's persistence and encouragement child Y1 was able to play through the first part of the melody.

The children seemed to be extremely distracted right from the very beginning of the session as they walked in the door and were consistently 'playing around'. This made it very difficult to achieve any sort of flow throughout the session. Child X2 in particular was completely disinterested and did not participate in any of the activities at all. Like child Y2, child X2 is quite young and found that the attention and concentration needed for this type of activity is just beyond her. In the previous sessions although she did not participate much she was very quiet and unassuming and so was not distracting anyone else from participating. However during this session she was consistently providing a major distraction which was having a negative effect on the group. Due to these distractions it was extremely hard to get any sort of flow while learning to play the new song or during the rhythm exercises which took away from the session as a whole. This was made it particularly difficult for her mother to concentrate on learning and playing with the other daughter as she was spending time trying to get child X2 to be quiet and stop mucking around. Similar to what happened with child Y2, child X2 did not continue further in the thesis project as the distraction for everyone else was too great.

4.4.5 Session 5

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

During this session the families were divided into two separate, 30 minute sessions. Each family was now just a pair consisting of the parent and the older child. The first family was family Y. From the onset and throughout the session was much more relaxed as child Y1 had the full attention of both parent Y and myself while also being free of all the other distractions that came from the other people being in the room. Due to the freedom given by only needing to concentrate on one child and parent, it was much easier to provide detailed instruction regarding the finer points of technique on the instrument and also playing the

music with the appropriate rhythm. This guidance which was echoed by parent Y seemed to be easier for child Y1 to take on board and implement than in previous weeks and ultimately led to being able to execute the music more efficiently. Child Y1 still appeared to become frustrated quickly when things did not go 'right', however he was able to be encouraged by parent Y to continue to persist. Concentration was at times difficult for child Y1 and he was given the chance to run around the room between attempts at playing the various melodies. This actually worked quite well at providing some relief from the concentration needed to sit down and play the music and also for providing a light and playful atmosphere which resonated well with both child Y1 and parent Y. It was much easier for the child and parent to interact, participate and learn together with only the two of them in the session and they both acknowledged this.

The session with parent X and child X1 resulted similarly. There was much more time and focus provided to both the child and parent and likewise between the child and parent. Throughout the sessions so far child X1 had picked up the basics quite easily and so had parent X, who unlike parent Y had no guitar playing experience prior to these sessions. This made it a little easier to guide them when they were trying to play through the songs together and stay in time with each other. Unexpectedly, child X1 was somewhat more distracted than in the previous sessions when, despite the wealth of distractions, she had been able to focus quite well. Perhaps it was the feeling of being under the spotlight and a perceived scrutiny that was making child X1 a little more unfocused than previously. Parent X was able to assist in helping her to concentrate which was mostly successful. Child X1 was asked whether she would also like to run around the room a couple of times between attempts at playing through the songs. She found this to be quite fun as well and the light-hearted atmosphere made the perceived scrutiny less intimidating and the child and parent were able to play through the first parts of both 'Twinkle' and 'Old MacDonald' together with some success. Once again it was much easier for the parent and child to interact and learn together without the wealth of distractions that had been present during the first few sessions and both parent and child felt that this was a positive thing.

4.4.6 Session 6

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

Due to the successes from having each family have their own separate 30 minute session, this would be the way that we would continue for the remainder of the thesis project. Family X was first this week and both parent X and child X1 said that they played music a couple of times during the week although individually rather than together. During the previous week

they had only played music once so considering that this was now twice as many times as the previous week suggests their interest is increasing and the abilities that they have fostered so far are easier to execute. Child X1 was not interested in playing any of the songs she had learned so far and wanted to do something new. In the interest of furthering her fine motor skills and providing a small challenge, she was introduced to some chords and strumming. A basic chord progression made up of some of the easier chords to play on ukulele was drawn up and she was shown how to play them. Due to now having to play multiple strings and use multiple fingers concurrently required fresh thinking and actions which seemed to interest her. The same chords were written out for guitar for parent X so that she could try to play along with her child. At one point towards the end of the session as child X1 was tiring out, she asked her mother "Why don't we have music everyday?" which was a significantly positive sign that the experience of learning to play music in this environment has been encouraging and successful. Another really positive aspect was that Family X was interested in viewing some of the footage of them playing together. However because the camera setup for observation doesn't provide a good angle for closely capturing them playing, during the final session the camera will be moved and they can perform one of the songs they have learned directly in front of the camera and they can keep that footage as a memento.

Child Y1 was initially excited to learn a new song and put in a good effort to attempt playing the start of 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' (Row). When asked to repeat the phrase five more times child Y1 almost dropped the ukulele, looked completely disheartened and cried out helplessly "Nooooo...". He then bargained to do it only twice. Parent Y then asked her son to really try to play it a few more times and then played the melody again for him a few times as an example. The bargaining then went down to only playing it one more time which set the tone for the rest of the session. Clearly the initial excitement of the new song subsided quickly and soon thereafter the prospect of playing any music at all seemed to incite a complete lack of interest whatsoever. It appeared as though Child Y1 had given up in his attempt to play ukulele and was giving clear signs that this activity was not for him at this point in time. As there was no desire to force child Y1 to do anything he really did not want to and continuing on the same path was leaving everyone frustrated, the rest of the session was used to discuss how we might better approach the remaining couple of sessions. It was decided by Parent Y that a small reward scheme would be put into place to try and further encourage Child Y1 to at least participate with some enthusiasm for the final couple of sessions. The reward will be two stickers for each of the last two sessions. When asked, Child Y1 said that he found playing ukulele to be quite hard and that is why it is frustrating. He said that it was quite hard to remember where to put his fingers on the fretboard and that it was also hard to look at the sheet and play as well. He was then told that this was the reason why we want to repeat short phrases a few times as it helps us to memorise the music so we don't

need to use the sheet all the time but, in this case, just as a reference. These points had been made from the very start that when using the tablature sheets they only need to be used as a reminder of where to put your fingers rather than a sheet that needs to be constantly looked at while playing. In further discussion with Parent Y it was wondered whether in the future, other musical instruments might provide Child Y1 an easier learning curve and greater immediate gratification in the music making process which might lead to a more satisfying music making and learning process.

4.4.7 Session 7

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

In this session, at the request of child X1, another new song was introduced which was 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' (Row). Once again this was a tune that the parent and child were familiar with so it would be easier to translate it onto their instruments. Some modified chords which were less physically demanding to execute were given to parent X in an attempt to allow her to accompany her daughter with greater ease. Parent X also was able to learn the melody quite quickly and was showing that her abilities had improved. Parent X was also very encouraging towards her daughter when her daughter was playing. Child X1 was now able to realise much more quickly if she had played a wrong note where previously it was not so apparent to her. This certainly suggests that her musical perceptions, both cognitive and motorskill wise, have developed positively over the sessions which will continue to lead to allowing for greater musical communication with her mother. Child X1 also seemed to be having much more fun as the playing and learning was becoming more familiar and easier to execute. During times when child X1 had to wait while her mother was being explained something she had a much greater ability to not lose concentration, become distracted and then disinterested with playing. For the last 10 minutes when they were trying to play the song together, there was initially some confusion regarding playing at the same time together even though their abilities to play the melody individually was quite good. They persevered though and after some more time clapping through the rhythm of the melody there was much more coherence as they were able to listen to each other better and ultimately could play the first part of the melody together quite well which was pleasing for them. In the previous session Family X had wanted to do a little performance in front of the camera that they could keep for themselves however when child X1 was asked if she wanted to do it she was no longer interested.

After the last session, where child Y1 was completely disinterested in the entire process, there was anticipation that the remaining sessions would provide a similar story. Nothing

further from the truth could have taken place as child Y1 came to the session knowing that it was the second last one and brought a refreshed attitude where he had decided that he was going to try to concentrate really well and give his best effort for the entire session. He was given the choice of which of the three songs he would start with and that he wouldn't use the music sheets as a reference but would play at the same time as parent Y and would take instruction from her as to where he should put his fingers on the ukulele. He also stated that he did not want to play a short phrase and then repeat it a few times but rather play through the entire tune from beginning to end. Parent Y would play at the same time on guitar and they both sang the melody of the tune as they played it on the instruments. The session came to life as the circumstances that they had created demanded that they genuinely participate in the activity together and the relationship between parent Y and child Y1 developed further in a positive way. Ultimately, they played through all three songs twice and at the end both parent Y and child Y1 were extremely satisfied with the time that they had spent together playing music. Child Y1 said that this session was fun and parent Y said that she really enjoyed herself being able to play music with her son.

4.4.8 Session 8

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

This, the penultimate session for Family X due to missing the first session, resulted in a significantly positive breakthrough. This was the second week that Family X was learning to play 'Row, Row, Row your Boat' (RYB). Child X1 started the session by showing that she was able to play through most of RYB with good accuracy and sound showing that her fine motor skills have developed greatly since the onset of the thesis project. However after being given praise from parent Y and from myself, she lost interest and did not participate extensively for the rest of the session. Perhaps she felt that she had accomplished what was required and did not feel like there was anymore to do even when she was asked to come and play the song with her mother. For the remainder of the session the focus was on Parent X and through controlled repetition of the short phrases of the melody and with the aid of careful guidance she was able to play RYB from start to finish, in time and from memory. The feeling of achievement was clearly noticeable and also the realisation that she and her daughter would be able to play music together had sunk in. Child X1 had noticed this and was then convinced, just prior to the conclusion of the session, to come and play RYB together with her mother. They attempted it a couple of times and although both could now play the melody individually, they will need further refinement to be able to listen clearly to each other and play together in time. This was certainly a landmark achievement as the realisation that they had now developed the ability to play music together started to sink in.

This was Family Y's final session and it mimicked the previous session where child Y1 was once again intent on trying to concentrate hard and do his best in what he knew was the last session. When asked what he wanted to do he definitively stated that he would play 'Old Macdonald' followed by 'Twinkle Twinkle' and then 'Row Row Row Your Boat', repeat the process again but not play 'Row Row Row Your Boat' as it seemed that he did not particularly enjoy playing for some reason so once would be enough for him. Parent Y would once again take the lead and play the melodies on guitar while at the same time directing Child Y1 as to where he needed to put his fingers, all the time while they both sung the melodies concurrently. This proved to be another extremely positive session as both parent and child were able to genuinely participate in the activity together and were relying on one another to get themselves through the activity. The sense of control in deciding what was going to be played seemed to also assist Child Y1, and subsequently Parent Y too, in completing the session with minimal fuss as he knew just how much was required of him. There was a great feeling of satisfaction for them both as they had played music together and were able to share the experience, while there was also the additional pride that Child Y1 displayed at being able to concentrate and commit to an activity that was challenging and did not give immediate gratification.

4.4.9 Session 9

Theoretical Goals: parent-child participation, relationship development, zone of proximal development, music, and guitar and ukulele.

Since Family X had missed the very first session an extra session was scheduled for them to make up for it. In the previous session both parent X and child X1 had managed to both learn the melody for 'Row, Row, Row your Boat' individually and had nearly been successful in playing the melody together. As such there was the belief that in this session they would be able to play the song together. Unfortunately child X1 was highly distracted and disinterested in participating and was unable to give a reason as to why although parent X believed it was likely due to tiredness. Child X1 was asked throughout the session to come and join her mother to play together but declined every time. As has been the precedent throughout these sessions, the child was not forced to sit down and play as the motivation needed to do so had come from themselves. This was slightly disappointing for Parent X although she has mentioned that she would like to continue to have music lessons both for herself and her daughter so it is likely that in the near future they will be able to play these songs together that they started learning during these sessions.

5 EVALUATION

The evaluation model used was based on elements from Michael Scriven's (1991, cited in Boulmetis & Dutwin 2014) goal-free and goal based evaluation models. In the goal-free evaluation model the goals of the project are not the basis for the evaluation, rather the evaluation explores "how and what the program is doing to address needs in the client population (Boulmetis & Dutwin 2014, 104)". Therefore this goal-free method evaluates what is happening in real-time during the project, unreferenced to the preconceived project goals. In contrast, the goal-based method references the evaluation directly to the goals that were designed at the beginning of the project. The goal-based method doesn't concern itself with the activities that are happening during the project but solely with the project goals (Boulmetis & Dutwin 2014). The usefulness and impact of the intended outcome will be assessed through data collection and interpretation which will explain what happened during the thesis project and evaluate whether the participants achieved the theoretical goals of the thesis project. The initial goal was to create an activity for child-parent participation through learning to play ukulele and guitar and this goal was achieved which satisfied Scriven's goal based evaluation model. Scriven's goal-free method was also met as the thesis project was evaluated in real-time via video observation and necessary adjustments were implemented in order to satisfy the needs of the participating group throughout the entire duration of the thesis project.

There were two stages of evaluation used: observation and feedback sheets. Observations via video took place after each session which allowed for immediate assessment of the happenings in that session from which further insight was gained and any necessary adjustments to the running of the sessions could subsequently be implemented if necessary. Lastly, a brief feedback sheet was given to the participating parents near the end of the thesis project in order for them to voice their opinions formally. Formative evaluation through video observation and feedback sheets was used during the thesis project to understand if any changes might be necessary to implement. Summative evaluation, also via video observation, was used at the end of each session to understand what was accomplished.

5.1 Observation

Observation can be an excellent technique for understanding a range of happenings and behaviours. There are many ways of performing an observation although a constant thread throughout all of these ways relates to interpretation. Any single person or group that performs an observation must always be aware of the essential requirement of being purely objective and unbiased. It is of the highest importance that any observations reported upon

are done so in this manner so that the integrity of the observation remains intact. Specifically in regards to observing children, Hobart & Frankel (2004, 8) state that the observation must be performed "in a detached and impartial manner being sure that you are not influenced by prior knowledge of the child or the family, your personal feelings towards the child and your expectation of her behaviour and development". It must be clearly understood that the data which is extracted from any observation is an interpretation of the situation through the senses of the observer/s. Factors such as preconception and expectation contribute to the observer's interpretation of the events that take place and thus this underlying element of observation, the observer, must be taken into account whenever it is used as a method of evaluation. Cultural knowledge, and/or lack of it, may play a significant role in an observer's interpretation as unfamiliarity with a particular culture's way of being or reacting in any given situation could be interpreted incorrectly if the observer is unaware of such cultural norms (Hobart & Frankel 2004, 9).

Any observation needs to have an aim to guide the observer. So many things are happening constantly during an observation and it's nearly impossible to be able to perceive and interpret everything that happens in real time. Therefore having some clear goals as to what is being observed and why will lead the observer towards observing things which meet the aims of the observation (Hobart & Frankel 2004, 31). Observation via video is very powerful in the context of this project due to a number of factors. Since leading and guiding the activities of the project and the observation are being performed by one person it is obvious that more accurate observational data can be gathered by having the sessions filmed and reviewing them shortly thereafter. Lee & Broderick (2007) explain that video technology "has the potential to free the observational researcher from the shackles of constantly having to record "field notes" and the ensuing loss of contextual detail and information." When performing the observations via video recording, the author must take into account all the aspects inherent in observation and provide objective, unbiased and culturally aware interpretations of the events.

The video observation was highly successful in being able to clearly evaluate what happened during the sessions. Since I was guiding the sessions and teaching the music, it would have been nearly impossible to observe with much objectivity, but being able to review the footage clearly the following day enabled unobstructed insight into the happenings of each session and the genuine progress and experience of the participants could be assessed and any necessary adjustments could be made. The parents were happy with the sessions being filmed and did not seem to be distracted by the camera at all. However, there was no doubt that for the children the camera was a mild distraction as they could be seen sometimes staring at it and also mentioned it a few times. The decision which was made at the onset of

the thesis, that the children would know that they were being filmed, appeared to be the right decision as I don't think that the children would have behaved much differently with no camera there and most importantly there was a sense of trust and openness established with was a key to the dynamics of the sessions.

5.2 Feedback Sheets

Initially there was a plan to distribute two feedback sheets to the participant parents with the first one being given approximately half way through the project with an aim to provide some degree of formative evaluation. Formative evaluation describes an evaluation technique which takes place during a project in order to have the opportunity to consider, criticise and potentially implement changes to the practices employed throughout the project's activities (Boulmetis & Dutwin 2014). However due to the rapidly changing circumstances in how the thesis project sessions transpired it was decided that one feedback sheet given nearer to the end of the thesis project would be sufficient.

The feedback questionnaire (Appendix 2) contained a combination of closed and open-ended questions with a focus on how the participants were experiencing the sessions and how they may have been altered to better suit their needs. In regards to the children participant's involvement in feedback it was the author's contention that asking similar questions that were in the parent's feedback sheets in an informal, conversational format either during or post one of the sessions at the midway point of the project will give the children a more appropriate forum to voice their opinions. The children mostly said that it was enjoyable although quite challenging. Most commonly they mentioned that they were quite tired, since it was late in the day, and that it was difficult at times to concentrate. That being said they were very happy and satisfied with being able to play the music. This was the first activity of it's kind that either parent had participated in and overall, both parents said that it was very enjoyable to play music with their children and that they would like to continue to do so after the thesis project. Both parents believed that it had a positive effect on their relationship that they were able to participate in something together with their child and they also felt that their children would have gotten more out of the activity if it was at a different time during the day.

6 DISCUSSION

In this study two families consisting of one parent (mother) and two of their children learned to play guitar and ukulele together as a way of participating in an activity together. This thesis has shown that, given the appropriate environment, a parent and their child can further develop their relationship in a positive way through learning to play music together and it does provide an effective avenue for parent-child participation. As participation was the main theoretical goal of the thesis, and specifically parent-child participation within early childhood education, it could have been assumed that by merely attending the project sessions this goal would have been met. While the basic attendance was a participation in it's own right, both families made a concerted effort to contribute and get involved throughout the duration of the project sessions which enhanced the level of parent-child participation. This did not appear obvious as the sessions began, however there were periods of adjustment throughout the sessions where observation and evaluation led to actions which positively effected the outcomes. The two younger children, both 4 years of age, showed that they were a bit too young for this kind of activity as the motor skills needed were not quite developed enough yet in addition to the levels of concentration required and these two elements subsequently fed each other. However the two older children, 6 years and 7 years of age, proved that they were absolutely capable by having sufficiently developed motor skills and concentration levels although these attributes were definitely tested.

There was a marked difference between the first four project sessions and the last four as the number of participants attending the sessions was reduced. Initially the participants had a one hour session together as a single group but unfortunately the atmosphere became too rowdy and it was easy for the children to get distracted which subsequently distracted the parents too. Two significant changes subsequently occurred which helped the participants get the most out of the sessions with the first being the decision that both of the younger children were having too much trouble participating and that they wouldn't continue further. This allowed the parents to concentrate more intently on the older child and also on themselves. The other significant change was dividing the two groups of families and them having two 30 minute sessions each. This afforded a much greater level of individual attention from myself to the parent and child in being able to explain concepts about playing the instruments and the music which led to an enhanced level of participation. Less people in the room allowed for a quieter and more relaxed environment and the parents were then able to direct their full attention towards the one child. All of these elements positively effected the outcomes of each project session and for the thesis project as a whole.

During the activity sessions the participants were taught how to play the basic melodies of 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star', 'Old MacDonald Had A Farm' and 'Row Row Row Your Boat' together and it was clear that the social angle of learning championed by the zone of proximal development enabled the participants (all beginners except for one) to develop musical skills to a point where they could play some basic music together on the guitar and ukulele in quite a short amount of time. With the appropriate guidance from the author and with the help that the participants gave to each other, the zone of proximal development was enlarged as evident by the learning of these new skills.

The relationship dynamic of the parent and child trying to both learn the music themselves, teach it to each other and then also play it together appeared to be a relationship developing activity as each member assumed different roles to the norm where usually a parent 'knows everything' and is always teaching/showing/explaining the world to the child. This is the main area where the theoretical goal of relationship development manifested into a practical function throughout the thesis project. Other areas of relationship development could be seen from the feedback questionnaire as both parents expressed that participating in this activity with their child had a positive effect on their relationship and also from the high level of satisfaction gained from learning to play music together. This is not necessarily an activity for any and all parent-child groups. Some children, and/or parents for that matter, may not be particularly interested in playing music and this could lead to great frustration through participating in an activity which is not desired.

Another element that was found to be a considerable factor was the time of day when the project sessions took place. As both physical and mental concentration are required when playing a musical instrument, mid-afternoon at 15.30 may not have been the best time for the children and a time in the morning may have aided in these areas. However, this was the only time that was available to have the participating group in the same location at the same time. Further considerations for improvements would be in the structure of the sessions. Possibly a better way to organise the sessions would be to have each family have a one hour session which would be broken up into three 20 minute periods. The first period would have the child being taught alone, the second period would have the parent taught alone and then in the third period they would come together to play. This may allow each individual to have focused attention on the musical skills needed to be developed for them to play their particular part so that when they come together at the end there is a greater understanding of what they need to do when being a part of a musical team. This may also help with the children being less easily distracted as they are having shorter bursts of concentration being demanded at a time. However the downside to this approach is that there is less time when parent and child are participating in the activity together.

Both families also mentioned that although there was some desire to play/practice during the week at home they were usually pushed for time due to other family and work commitments in addition to the children usually being too tired to be able to concentrate on learning in the evenings. Although not essential to the aims of this thesis, playing the instruments regularly may have led to learning some of the music quicker which in turn might have increased the time that the parent and child could have played the music together as opposed to most of the time being spent learning it.

Upon developing this idea as an activity for parent-child participation, it may be prudent to have the activity earlier in the day. This leans toward the activity being most effective on weekends when the majority of working parents have the available time in the morning or early afternoon to participate. Furthermore, as learning to play music develops over longer periods of time than the 8 weeks of this thesis project, this type of activity has the potential to flourish greatly if pursued over the course of a year or longer. It is crucial to remember that this activity is about the participation of the parent and child together and not simply about the child or parent learning to play music as a hobby. As such the material that is used needs to be appropriate for the abilities of each participant and that they are able to engage in the learning process together as much as the playing process.

7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This thesis project will comply with the ethical principles as advised by The Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK). TENK states that the "Ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences are divided into three areas: 1. Respecting the autonomy of research subjects, 2. Avoiding harm and 3. Privacy and data protection (TENK 2009)."

7.1 Autonomy

In regards to the autonomy of the research subjects it is necessary that the participation is "voluntary and based on informed consent (TENK 2009)". Informed consent is the principle that the research subjects have been informed and completely understand the research prior to their agreeing to take part (Oliver, 2010). The research subjects participating were contacted through the working life partner and were explained in writing the scope of the thesis project and that their participation is completely voluntary prior to assenting. They gave their consent in writing via email. As this project involves minors between the ages of 5

and 7 particular care must be observed. The Constitution of Finland and the Child Custody and Right of Access Act (361/1983) present cases for a child's complete autonomy and also for the right of a child's guardian to determine the child's personal affairs. If needed, a balance must be struck between these two legislations on a case by case basis (TENK 2009). In this project the parents were informed of the scope of the research and asked their children if they wanted to be involved prior to consenting.

The participants have been informed about how data will be collected and the duration of the research. TENK outlines some of the essential information requirements that participants need to be informed of and they are: "1) the researcher's contact information, 2) the research topic, 3) the method of collecting data and the estimated time required, 4) the purpose for which data will be collected, how it will be archived for secondary use, and 5) the voluntary nature of participation (TENK 2009)." The participants in this project have been given this information.

Participants are allowed to ask for further information such as "1) a study's scientific or doctrinal orientation, 2) how confidential data will be protected and where data will be archived after the study, 3) how and when the results of the study will be published (TENK 2009)." In this project the participants have been informed that they are allowed to ask for any further information about the research. As this is a study based on subject observation, there is the potential that over the course of the project the relationship between researcher and subject/s deepens and that greater exposure to information will be desired (TENK 2009). This phenomenon is noted and understood by the researcher and will be acted upon within the boundaries of ethical principles should it occur.

7.2 Avoiding Harm

If at any stage during this project it is felt that there is potential for harm to be caused, that particular aspect of the project will either be modified or removed from the project entirely. Avoiding harm to the participants covers certain aspects of mental, financial and social harm. This harm can arise from data collection, data storage and the publication of the research. In order to avoid harm, respect and dignity must be given to the participants in how they are treated during the research and how they are reported on. People have varying degrees of sensitivity to certain issues and also have varying limits on privacy, as such informed consent and autonomy allows participants control over these matters.

7.3 Privacy and Data Protection

Privacy and data protection is a key element in protecting participants from harm and specifically financial and/or social harm. Published results must be presented in a non-judgemental fashion, free from disrespect or prejudice. Results producing a negative outlook should not be shunned by the researcher but must be presented in a balanced manner and be founded on truthful, reliable and systematically analysed data gathered using ethically sound techniques (TENK 2009).

The ethical collection and storage of data falls into the category of the protection of privacy. It is the participant's right that their identifying data is protected and kept confidential and it is the researcher's duty to abide by these rights. Protection of privacy can be placed into three categories: "1) protecting research data and confidentiality, 2) storing or disposing of research data and 3) research publications (TENK 2009)." Although personal data containing identifiers can be used in an appropriate research context with the informed consent of the participant, if it is unnecessary for analysing the data then it is deemed unneeded and shouldn't be used or stored. Personal data can be seen as "any information on a private individual and any information on his/her personal characteristics or personal circumstances, where these are identifiable as concerning him/her or the members of his/her family or household (The Personal Data Act (523/1999) cited in TENK 2009)."

In this project all personal data will be treated with the utmost respect and will be used in accordance with the established ethical principles and legislations. In this project there will be video data of the participants containing direct identifiers. The author will be responsible for the secure storage of the data for the duration of the project up until the final report has been published where at this point all the data containing identifiers, video or otherwise, will be destroyed.

References

American Musical Therapy Association. 2015. How can music therapy techniques be applied by healthy individuals? Accessed 24 June 2015. <http://www.musictherapy.org/faq/#267>

Armstrong, T. 2009. *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* (3rd Edition). Alexandria, VA, USA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD). Book from ebrary. Accessed 19 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Boulmetis, J., & Dutwin, P. 2014. *Research Methods for the Social Sciences : ABCs of Evaluation : Timeless Techniques for Program and Project Managers* (3rd Edition). Somerset, NJ, USA: Wiley. Book from ebrary. Accessed 1 October 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Bowlby, J. *A Secure Base: Parent-Child Attachment and Healthy Human Development*. London, UK. Routledge, 1998. Accessed 2 July 2015. <http://www.abebe.org.br/wp-content/uploads/John-Bowlby-A-Secure-Base-Parent-Child-Attachment-and-Healthy-Human-Development-1990.pdf>

Bronfenbrenner, U. 1979. *Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 22 July 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

City of Helsinki. 2015. Language-oriented Day Care Centres. Accessed 24 June 2015. <http://www.hel.fi/www/Helsinki/en/day-care-education/day-care/private/language-oriented/>

CLIL Research Network. 2015. What is CLIL? Accessed 24 June 2015. <http://clil-ren.org/about/about-clil-ren/>

Coate, P, ed. 2007. *Focus on strategic management*. Bradford, GBR: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd. Book from ebrary. Accessed 30 July 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Cullen, J., Flear, M. & Anning, A., eds. 2004. *Early Childhood Education: Society and Culture*. London, GBR: SAGE Publications Ltd. Book from ebrary. Accessed 21 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Dictionary.com. 2015. Accessed 10th November 2015.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/tablature>

European Suzuki Association. 2015 . Accessed 7th July 2015.

<http://www.europeansuzuki.org/about-us/the-suzuki-method/>

Hobart, C. & Frankel, J. 2004. A Practical Guide to Child Observation and Assessment. Third Edition. Cheltenham: Nelson Thomas

Johnson, J. 2002. Who Needs Classical Music? : Cultural Choice and Musical Value. Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 18 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Kielo International Kindergarten. 2015. About Us. Accessed 24 June 2015.

<http://www.kielokindergarten.fi/about-us/>

Lang, F., & Fingerma, K. 2003. Growing Together: Personal Relationships Across the Life Span. West Nyack, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 22 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Laukens. D. 2010. How to Read Guitar Chord Charts. Accessed 10th November 2015.

<http://www.guitarchordsmagic.com/guitar-chord-charts/how-to-read-guitar-chord-charts.html>

Lee, N., & Broderick, A., eds. 2007. Developments in human observation methodologies.

Bradford, GBR: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd. Book from ebrary. Accessed 31 July 2015.

<http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Mac Naughton, G., & Hughes, P. 2011. Parents And Professionals In Early Childhood Settings.

Berkshire, GBR: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 17 August 2015.

<http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

McLeod, S. 2010. Zone of Proximal Development. Accessed 16 September 2015.

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/Zone-of-Proximal-Development.html>

Mitchell, Peter. 1992. Psychology of Childhood. Florence, KY, USA: Routledge. Book from

ebrary. Accessed 2 July 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Noller, P., Feeney, J. & Peterson, C. 2001. *Personal Relationships Across the Lifespan*. New York: Taylor and Francis. Book from Ebook Library. Accessed 29 June 2015.
<http://www.laurea.ebilib.com/patron/>

Oliver, P. 2010. *Student's Guide to Research Ethics (2nd Edition)*. Maidenhead, GBR: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 4 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Pound, L., & Harrison, C. 2002. *Supporting Musical Development in the Early Years*. Berkshire, GBR: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 18 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Reid, V., Stahl, D., & Striano, T. 2010. The presence or absence of older siblings and variation in infant goal-directed motor development. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 34 (4), 325-329. Article from Sage Journals. Accessed 7th July 2015.
<http://online.sagepub.com/>

Richardson, K. 1998. *Models of Cognitive Development*. London, GBR: Psychology Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 24 July 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Sandercoe, J. 2009. *How To Read TAB and Chord Boxes*. <http://www.justinguitar.com/en/BC-108-TABandBoxes.php>

Saracho, O., & Spodek, B., eds. 1998. *Multiple Perspectives on Play in Early Childhood Education*. Albany, NY, USA: State University of New York Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 17 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Smith, David. 2004. *Social Work and Evidence-Based Practice*. London, GBR: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Book from ebrary. Accessed 23 June 2015.
<http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

STAKES. 2004. *National Curriculum Guidelines on Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland*. Accessed 23 June 2015.
<http://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/75535/267671cb-0ec0-4039-b97b-7ac6ce6b9c10.pdf?sequence=1>

TENK. 2009. Humanities and Social and Behavioural Sciences and Proposals for Ethical Review. Accessed July 30 2015. <http://www.tenk.fi/sites/tenk.fi/files/ethicalprinciples.pdf>

Tranquada, J., & King, J. 2012. 'Ukulele : A History. Honolulu, HI, USA: University of Hawaii Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 19 August 2015.
<http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Tyler, J., & Sparks, P. 2002. Guitar and Its Music : From the Renaissance to the Classical Era. Oxford, GBR: Oxford University Press, UK. Book from ebrary. Accessed 19 August 2015.
<http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Underdown, A. 2006. Health and Well-Being in Early Childhood. Buckingham, GBR: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 20 August 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Waller, T., ed. 2005. Introduction to Early Childhood : A Multidisciplinary Approach. London, GBR: SAGE Publications Inc. (US). Book from ebrary. Accessed 23 July 2015. <http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Wood, E., & Attfield, J. 2005. Play, Learning and the Early Childhood Curriculum (2nd Edition). London, GBR: SAGE Publications Ltd. Book from ebrary. Accessed 21 August 2015.
<http://site.ebrary.com.nelli.laurea.fi/lib/laurea/home.action>

Illustration 1

Tablature Explanation (Sandercoe, 2009)

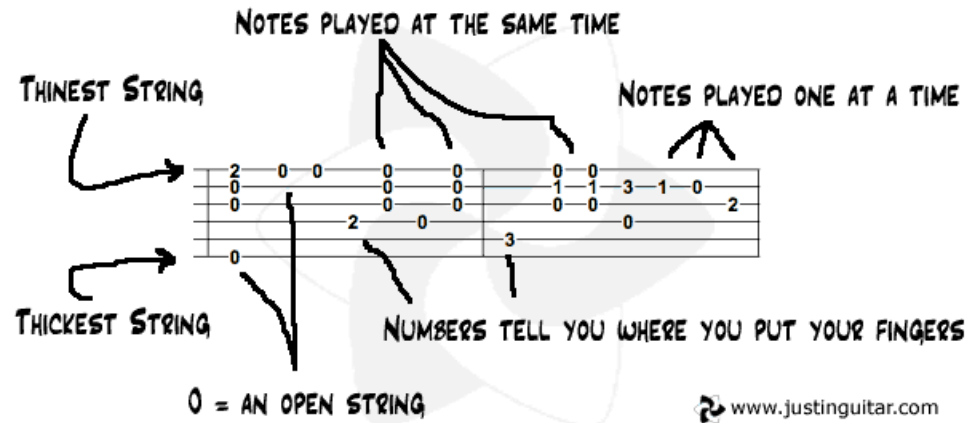
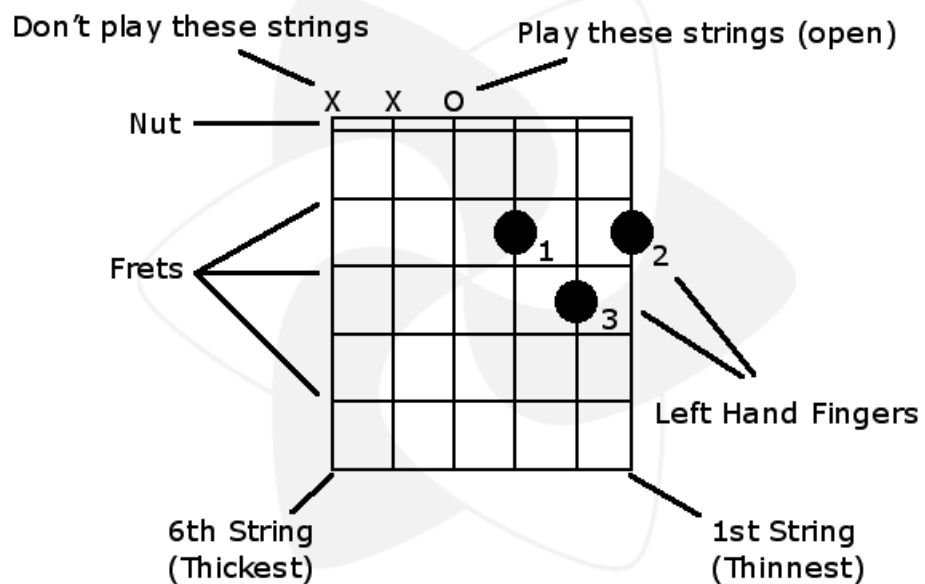


Illustration 2

Guitar Chord Diagrams Explanation (Sandercoe, 2009)



Appendix 1

Ukulele Worksheets

Ukulele Worksheet 1

Fun Facts - The Ukulele

About 60 years after the introduction of the guitar, a Portuguese immigrant introduced the small four-stringed instrument called the braginha. This replaced the guitar as the preferred range instrument because it was small and fit in the saddlebag. The Hawaiians adapted this instrument and named it the ukulele.

Ukulele means “jumping flea” referring to how fast the fingers move on the strings. According to Queen Liliuokalani, the last Hawaiian monarch, the name means “the gift that came here”, from the Hawaiian words “uku” (gift or reward) and “lele” (to come).

(http://luaualamaku.com/kauai_luau_fun_facts_the_ukulele.html)

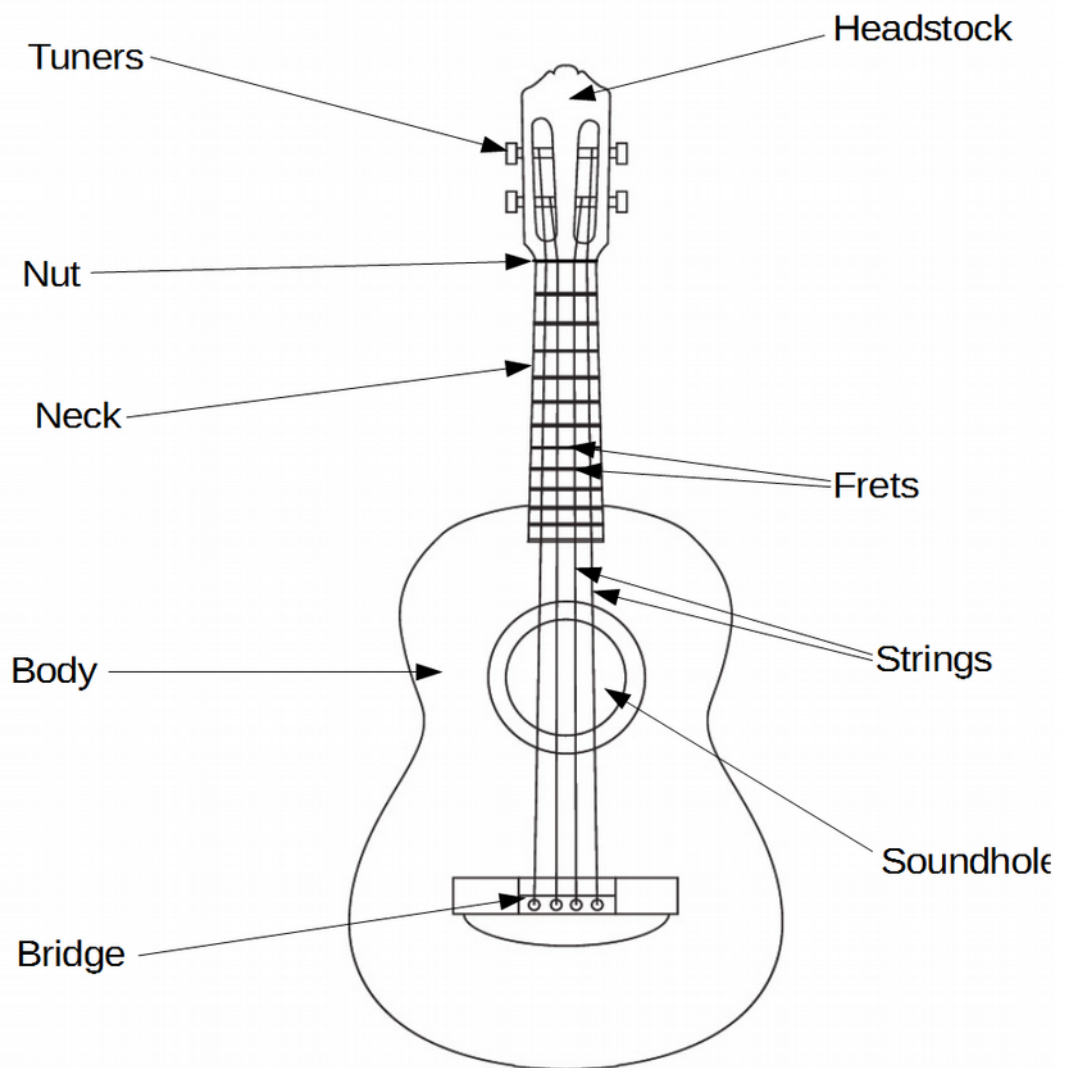
1. How many strings does a ukulele have?

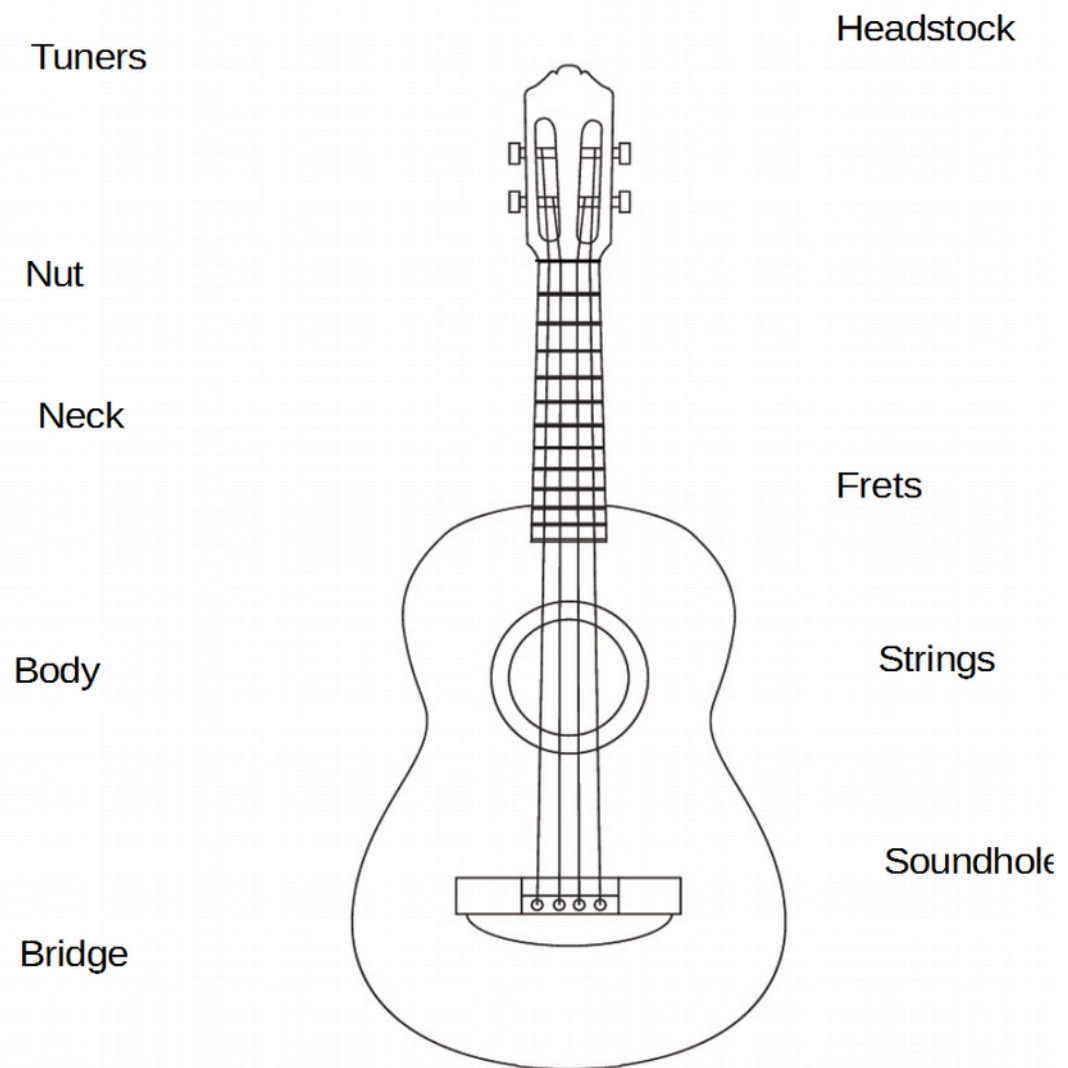
2. What country does the ukulele come from?

3. How many frets does your ukulele have?

4. What does the word Ukulele mean?

5. Draw a ukulele!





Appendix 2

Questions from Feedback Questionnaire

1. Have you participated in any similar activities with your child in the past? If so, what were they?
2. Overall, has this been an enjoyable experience for you and your child? What has been the most enjoyable parts and the least enjoyable parts of this experience for you and your child?
3. Does your child speak about playing ukulele/music during the week? Do they look forward to the session? Do you look forward to the sessions?
4. Can you see this type activity, or something similar, being something you would like to continue doing with your child in the future?
5. In what ways do you think this thesis could be improved?
6. Do you feel that this experience has had a positive or a negative effect on your relationship with your child? Can you describe these effects?

Appendix 3

Music Sheets

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Guitar

The guitar tablature is presented in three systems, each with a treble (T) and bass (B) staff. Chord diagrams for A, D, and E are provided above the corresponding measures. The lyrics are written below the notes.

System 1:

Chords: A, D, A, D, A, E, A

Treble Staff: 0 0 7 7 | 9 9 7 | 5 5 4 4 | 2 2 0

Bass Staff: 0 0 7 7 | 9 9 7 | 5 5 4 4 | 2 2 0

Lyrics: Twin - kle - Twin - kle lit tle star, how I won - der what you are?

System 2:

Chords: A, D, A, E, A, D, A, E

Treble Staff: 7 7 5 5 | 4 4 2 | 7 7 5 5 | 4 4 2

Bass Staff: 7 7 5 5 | 4 4 2 | 7 7 5 5 | 4 4 2

Lyrics: Up a - bove the world so high, like a dia - mond in the sky.

System 3:

Chords: A, D, A, D, A, E, A

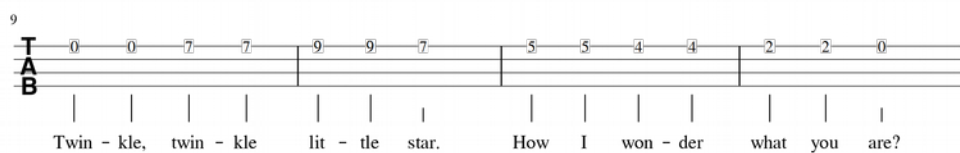
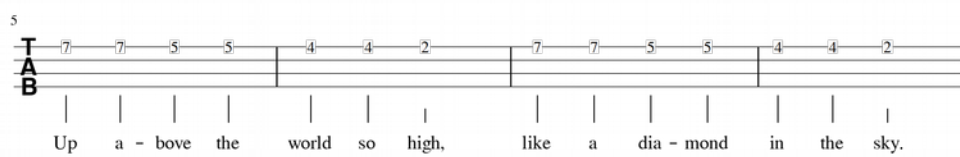
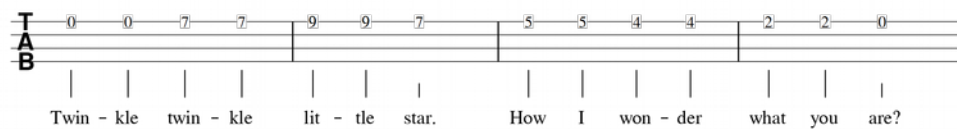
Treble Staff: 0 0 7 7 | 9 9 7 | 5 5 4 4 | 2 2 0

Bass Staff: 0 0 7 7 | 9 9 7 | 5 5 4 4 | 2 2 0

Lyrics: Twin - kle twin - kle lit - tle star, how I won - der what you are.

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Ukulele



Old MacDonald

for Guitar

1

D G D D A D

5

D G D D A D

9

D D D D

13

D G D D A D

Old Mac - Don - ald had a farm, ee i ee i o. And

on that farm he had a cow, ee i ee i o. With a

moo moo here and a moo moo there, here a moo there a moo eve-rywhere a moo moo.

Old Mac - Don - ald had a farm, ee i ee i o.

Old MacDonald for Ukulele

5

T 5 5 5 0 | 2 2 0 | 9 9 7 7 | 5 0

A

B

Old Mac - Don - ald had a farm, ee i ee i o. And

5

T 5 5 5 0 | 2 2 0 | 9 9 7 7 | 5 0 0

A

B

on that farm he had a cow, ee i ee i o. With a

9

T 5 5 5 0 0 | 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 5 5

A

B

moo moo here and a moo moo there, here a moo there a moo eve-rywhere a moo moo.

13

T 5 5 5 0 | 2 2 0 | 9 9 7 7 | 5

A

B


Old Mac - Don - ald had a farm ee i ee i o.

Row Row Row Your Boat

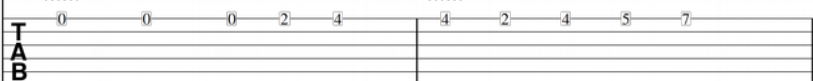
for Guitar

Swing feel 

Acoustic Guitar




Acoustic Guitar

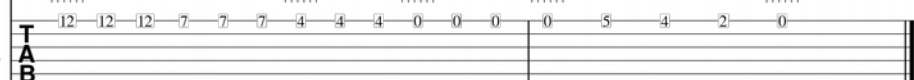


Row row row your boat gent - ly down the stream,

Guit.




Guit.



mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly is but a dream.

Row Row Row Your Boat

for Ukulele

Swing feel 

Ukulele

Row row row your boat gent - ly down the stream,

Ukulele

Row row row your boat gent - ly down the stream,

Uk.

mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly life is but a dream.

Uk.

mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly mer - ri - ly life is but a dream.